



Patient & Family Guide
2022

Dobutamine[®] Stress Echocardiogram



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Dobutamine[®] Stress Echocardiogram

What is a Dobutamine[®] stress echocardiogram (DSE)?

- Your coronary arteries supply blood to your heart. A DSE is a test to find out if there are any blockages in these arteries and, if so, how severe (very bad) the blockages are.
- This test may be done when the usual tests for this problem cannot be done, or have not given clear results.

Who will do the test?

The test will be done by a cardiologist (heart doctor) and a cardiac sonographer (heart ultrasound specialist). The cardiologist will talk about the test with you, including possible side effects.

How do I get ready for the test?

- There is no preparation for this test.
- Please bring a list of all of your current medications.

- You may want to arrange for a drive home before your test. You can drive yourself home but you may feel tired after the test.

If you are an outpatient:

- Go to the Halifax Infirmary, Summer Street entrance.
 - › Register at the kiosk on Level 4.
 - › Then, go to the Minor Procedures Clinic on Level 4 to get ready for your test.

What will happen during the test?

- You will be asked to lie on your side.
- Small stickers (electrodes) will be placed on your chest, arms, and legs. The electrodes will then be attached to an echocardiogram machine and an ultrasound machine.
- An intravenous (I.V.) will be inserted (put in) in your hand or arm. The medication Dobutamine® will be given through the I.V. This medication has been given to people with heart problems for many years.
- Your blood pressure and heart rate will be checked every 3 minutes.
- There will always be a doctor present during the test.

- A small device called an ultrasound probe will be moved over your chest. This will give images of your heart.
- Dobutamine® can cause:
 - › Chest pain
 - › Feeling that your heart is pounding fast
 - › Headache
 - › Nausea (upset stomach)
 - › Anxiety
 - › Shakiness
- Your blood pressure may drop a bit or you may have an irregular heart rhythm. **These problems will stop as soon as the Dobutamine® is stopped.**
- There are no long-term effects from this medication.
- The cardiologist and cardiac sonographer will monitor the effect of the Dobutamine® on your heart using the electrocardiogram machine.
- You may be given a medication (called a contrast) by I.V. to help make the ultrasound more clear.
- You may be given a medication called atropine by I.V. to raise your heart rate during the test. This medication may make your mouth feel dry.

Will I have any discomfort?

- The test is not painful.
- The I.V. needle may cause temporary discomfort when it is inserted. There may be a bruise where the needle enters the skin.

How long will the test take?

The test will take about 1½ to 2 hours.

After the test

- You will be taken back to the Minor Procedures Clinic recovery area. You will be monitored there for about 1 hour.

You may still feel tired after the recovery time. You are allowed to drive yourself home but you may want to arrange for someone to pick you up.

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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